

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend Claims 1-26 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A communication module (~~CM_i~~) adapted to be removably connected to a node (~~110~~) in a communications network (~~140~~), the module (~~CM_i~~) being adapted to perform a primary function pertaining to an over-all operation of the module (~~CM_i~~) and a secondary function involving control of the primary function, comprising:
 - a first digital storage unit (~~M1~~) adapted to hold information pertaining to accomplishment of the primary function;_; and
 - a bi-directional interface (~~I_w~~) towards the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~),
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the bi-directional interface (~~I_w~~) comprises at least one optical interface and is adapted to provide a local wireless access to the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~), the local wireless access being provided independently of the primary function.
2. (currently amended) A communication module (~~CM_i~~) according to claim 1,
~~characterized in that~~ wherein the bi-directional interface (~~I_w~~) is adapted to allow read out (~~D_o~~) of data from the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~).
3. (currently amended) A communication module (~~CM_i~~) according to claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 1 or 2~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the bi-directional interface (~~I_w~~) is adapted to allow updating (~~D_i~~) of the contents of the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~).
4. (currently amended) A communication module (~~CM_i~~) according to claim 1 ~~any one of the claims 2 or 3~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~) comprises a first register (~~M_{tr}~~) including status data with respect to the primary function, and the bi-directional interface (~~I_w~~) is adapted to:
 - receive a request for status information;_; and
 - transmit a status report on basis of the request, the status report including data from the first register (~~M_{tr}~~) which pertains to at least one parameter of the primary function.
5. (currently amended) A communication module (~~CM_i~~) according to claim 3, wherein
~~any one of the claims 3 or 4~~, ~~characterized in that~~
 - the first digital storage unit (~~M1~~) comprises a second and volatile register (~~C_{tr}~~) adapted

to store information pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary function; and,

the bi-directional interface (I_W) is adapted to receive at least one control command,
wherein and

it the bi-directional interface is adapted to alter at least one parameter in the second register ($Ctrl$) pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary function on basis of the at least one control command.

6. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 3, wherein the communication module ~~any one of the claims 3—5, characterized in that~~

it comprises a second digital storage unit ($M2$) adapted to temporarily store information pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary function,

the first digital storage unit ($M1$) comprises a third and non-volatile register (Prg) adapted to store information pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary function,

the bi-directional interface (I_W) is adapted to receive at least one piece of information pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary function, and

it the bi-directional interface is adapted to store the at least one piece of information in the second digital storage unit ($M2$).

7. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 6, ~~characterized in that it~~ wherein the communication module is adapted to, after reset of the module (CM_i), alter the contents of the third register (Prg) on basis of the at least one piece of information in the second digital storage unit ($M2$).

8. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 1, wherein the communication module ~~any one of the preceding claims, characterized in that it~~ comprises an access module (A) adapted to allow access to the first digital storage unit ($M1$) via the bi-directional interface (I_W), the access module (A) being controllable via an authorization unit ($120, 121, 122; 123$) such that the access module (A) blocks access to the first digital storage unit ($M1$) via the bi-directional interface (I_W) at least until an authorization signal (S_A) has been generated by the authorization unit ($120, 121, 122; 123$) with respect to the module (CM_i).

9. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 8, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the access module (A) comprises an authorization sub-unit (a) adapted to

receive a pass phrase (PW) from a portable software carrier unit (130) via the bi-directional interface (I_w), the access module (A) blocking access to the first digital storage unit (M1) via the bi-directional interface (I_w) at least until an acceptable pass phrase (PW) has been received.

10. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 8, wherein ~~any one of the claims 8 or 9, characterized in that~~ the authorization signal (S_A(F_{Addr#1})) includes an address field (F_{Addr#1}) which designates a specific module position (Addr#1, ..., Addr#n) within the node (110).

11. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 8, wherein ~~any one of the claims 8—10, characterized in that~~ the authorization signal (S_A(ID_i)) includes a unique identifier (ID_i) of the module (CM_i).

12. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 10, wherein ~~the communication module any one of the claims 10 or 11, characterized in that it~~ comprises an identification unit (ID) adapted to indicate an active data transmission state (i_{ID}) upon reception of an authorization signal (S_A) which designates the communication module (CM_i).

13. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 12, wherein ~~characterized in that~~ the identification unit (ID) comprises a first optical indicator (i_{ID1}) indicative of the bi-directional interface (I_w) being open for access to the first digital storage unit (M1).

14. (currently amended) A communication module (CM_i) according to claim 12, wherein ~~any one of the claims 12 or 13, characterized in that~~ the identification unit (ID) comprises a second optical indicator (i_{ID2}) indicative of data (D_i; D_o) being transmitted over the bi-directional interface (I_w).

15. (currently amended) A method of communicating with a communication module (CM_i) being removably connected to a node (110) in a communications network (140), the module (CM_i) being adapted to perform a primary function pertaining to an over-all operation of the module (CM_i) and a secondary function involving control of the primary function, the method comprising:

generating an authorization signal (S_A) for the module; (CM_i);

receiving the authorization signal (S_A) in the module; (CM_i); and

exchanging data ($D_i; D_o$) between the module (CM_i) and a portable software carrier unit (130) via a bi-directional optical interface (I_w), the data including information pertaining to accomplishment of the primary function and being exchanged independently of the primary function.

16. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15, ~~characterized by~~ wherein the authorization signal ($S_A(F_{Ad\#1})$) ~~including~~ includes an address field ($F_{Ad\#1}$) which designates a specific module position ($Ad\#1, \dots, Ad\#n$) within the node (110).

17. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15, wherein ~~any one of the claims 15 or 16, characterized by~~ the authorization signal ($S_A(ID_i)$) ~~including~~ includes a unique identifier (ID_i) of the module (CM_i).

18. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15 further comprising ~~any one of the claims 15—17, characterized by~~ receiving a pass phrase (PW) in the communication module (CM_i), the pass phrase (PW) being received via the bi-directional optical interface (I_w).

19. (currently amended) A method according to claim 18, ~~characterized by~~ wherein the pass phrase (PW) ~~including~~ includes a static segment (pw_s).

20. (currently amended) A method according to claim 18 wherein ~~any one of the claims 18 or 19, characterized by~~ the pass phrase (PW) ~~including~~ includes a dynamic segment (pw_D), the method comprising calculating the dynamic segment (pw_D) in the portable software carrier unit (130) and a central resource (120) respectively.

21. (currently amended) A method according to claim 18 wherein ~~any one of the claims 18—20, characterized by~~ the pass phrase (PW) ~~including~~ includes a cyclic redundancy checksum (CRC), the cyclic redundancy checksum (CRC) being based on data (D_i) which is to update the contents of the first digital storage ($M1$).

22. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15 further comprising ~~any one of the claims 15—21, characterized by~~ updating (D_i) of the contents of the first digital storage unit ($M1$) via the bi-directional interface (I_w).

23. (currently amended) A method according to claim 22, further comprising:
~~characterized by~~

receiving at least one control command via the bi-directional interface; (I_w); and
altering at least one parameter pertaining to the accomplishment of the primary
function on basis of the at least one control command.

24. (currently amended) A method according to claim 23 further comprising ~~any one of
the claims 23 or 23, characterized by the steps of:~~

receiving at least one piece of information pertaining to the accomplishment of the
primary function via the bi-directional interface; (I_w);

storing temporarily the at least one piece of information in a second digital storage unit;
(M_2);

resetting the communication module; (CM_1); and
altering the contents of the first digital storage (M_1) on basis of the at least one piece of
information.

25. (currently amended) A method according to claim 15 further comprising ~~any one of
the claims 15—24, characterized by~~ reading out (D_6) data from the first digital storage unit (M_1)
via the bi-directional interface (I_w).

26. (currently amended) A method according to claim 25, further comprising:
~~characterized by~~

receiving a request for status information via the bi-directional interface; (I_w); and
transmitting a status report on basis of the request, the status report including data
pertaining to at least one parameter of the primary function.